

NEWSLETTER

10 Market Square Hayle Cornwall TR27 4HE
Telephone 01736 757900 Fax 01736 757010
Email admin@cinnamon.org.uk www.cinnamon.org.uk

Registered Charity No 1134680



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Dear Friends

How very glad we all are that spring is here and each day, literally and metaphorically, there is a little more light. If that isn't enough for a smile, our wonderful sanctuary pets have provided some images of happiness to help....

Happiness is....



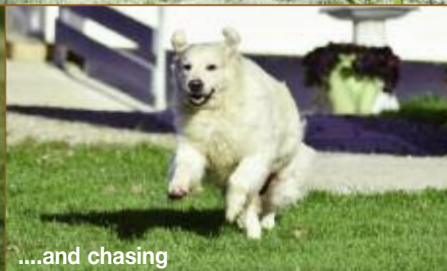
....a banana when
you've just woken up



....playing in the frost



....and racing



....and chasing



....and dancing with a stick



....a mushroom



....a snooze in the shade

CT '100 Club

Our big winner who received £100 in December was **Roslyn Dowdall** (Cornwall). Other winners who have each received £25 are: Oct: **Roma Ellis** (Essex), Nov: **Eirlys Mathieson** (Merseyside), Jan: **Susan Bryson** (Devon), Feb: **Christine Shuttleworth** (West Yorkshire) and Mar: **Sheila Case** (Kent).



Fundraising Events



Maggie Martin



Alan and Gay Holmes
helping Maggie Martin



Paul Cinnamon

Morag Davies (Devon) raised £35 with the sale of her handmade facemasks and felt cat toys. Amazing as ever, **Maggie Martin** (West Sussex) raised £1,760 from the sale of gift sets, soaps, apples, tomatoes and her home-made doggy treats, as well as a lovely Christmas Fair. A huge well done, Maggie. Help came from **Alan** and **Gay Holmes**, **Lorna Bolger** and **Mary Childs**. **Heather Cawston** (Dorset) and **Donna Winters** raised £280 with the sale of their fabulous home-grown plants. Volunteer **Jo Hodgson** (Hampshire) and the team at **Appello Limited** raised £52 by taking photos while wearing their facemasks! **Beverley Lemin** (Cornwall) held a doorstep sale and raised £21. **Jane Athey** (Devon) raised £380 by making and selling facemasks to neighbours. **Paul Cinnamon** (Middlesex) – that really is his name! – raised a stupendous £3,658.75 by cycling from Land's End to John O' Groats. 1,650km, 15,650m of climbing, all in just 10 days, and all because he turned 60 in June – fantastic! **Tony** and **Marilyn Baker** (East Sussex) raised £60 with the sale of plants at their beach hut. **Katie Young** (Warwickshire) raised £140 with a competition held on her dog **Buddy's** Instagram page. **Ann Mutton** (Middlesex) chose us as the charity of her year as President of the **Inner Wheel Club of Feltham** and they raised a stonking £936.53. The volunteers at **The Crossing Charity Shop** raised £125. **Celia Olson** (Devon) raised £30 with sales of her art during the Devon Open Studios event. **Rachel Burt** (Northamptonshire) raised £50 with the sale of her ever popular homemade dog biscuits. **Anne Hillman-Churcher** (West Midlands) and the **Thursday Craft Group** raised £60. **Jean McCarthy** (Staffordshire) raised £100 in lieu of sending Christmas cards. **Iron Acton Women's Institute** (North

Somerset) chose us as one of their charities of the year and raised £100. **Diane Chidzey** (Somerset) raised £395 with her beautiful pictures and hand-drawn cards. **Beaverbrooks Charitable Trust** (Lancashire) allocate money to their staff to present as a team to a charity of their choice, **Guildford Branch** chose us, and we received £500. More facemasks! **Valerie Peacock** (Cornwall) raised £150 with her terrific handmade designs and needlework alterations. **Carolyn Morris** (Cornwall) has been selling books at her doorstep again and raised £120. **Gaynor Latham** and **June Andrews** (South Glamorgan) have been busy! They made and sold facemasks, plus held weekly coffee mornings in their garden for their knitting group and raised £120. **Victoria Smith-Gillard** (Kent) held a relax dog class and raised £100, great idea! **Linda Oliver** and the team at **The Outside Clinic** (Wiltshire) chose us as their Charity of the Year and raised £240. **Irene Hampson** (Merseyside) raised £10 with her online sales. **Kathleen Levans** (Dorset) celebrated a special birthday and raised £70 in lieu of gifts. **Monika Boehmer** and the residents of **Berrington Court** (Worcestershire) raised £100 with their fundraising events. **Lou Oppenheim** (Perthshire) raised £100 in lieu of sending Christmas gifts. **Sara Morton** (Somerset) held a tombola at her shop, **All 4 Pawz**, and raised a brilliant £500. Also in Somerset, **Myra Cox** has been a star again, raising £94 with the sale of Christmas cards and delicious jams. **The London & Northern Home Counties Branch of the Basset Hound Club** sent £50. **Dig It Dog Training** (Cheshire) raised £50 with their raffle. Another raffle! **North Dorset Canine Ringcraft** raised £70 for us. **The English Shetland Sheepdog Club Working Section** (Middlesex) celebrated their 50th anniversary and sent us an incredible £1,000. **The Whippet Club** (Derbyshire) raised £100. **The Severn & Avon Working Gundog Club** raised £150.

I'm amazed that you managed to do any fundraising, but, ingenious as always, you've found ways! Thank you all so very much – let's hope that this year more of your plans and events will, at some point, become a reality!



Volunteer Views

We're off to Wales and **Vincent Byfield** for our first view:

"I volunteer for the amazing Cinnamon Trust in the valleys of South Wales where I live. I walk two dogs, Marley and Orio, for Thelma and Janet respectively who are both unable to walk their dogs for health reasons.

Whilst it's so lovely to walk both boys and give them the exercise, play and sniffs they need and love, it's also so rewarding helping and making a difference to the owners.



Vincent Byfield

The boys' owners are lovely and very appreciative and grateful for the support, service and help The Cinnamon Trust provide, and we have become good friends.

Both dogs have really come out of their shell since I've started walking them. Marley has lost weight, is very confident and cute and is now managing to run (well, trot, bless him) toward the end of our walk and loves sniffing everywhere – he also loves other dogs! Orio is a lot bigger and stronger, but lovely natured. He loves running, loves the water, and always gets the zoomies while we're out, getting very excited in the process. He has recently become very playful and we have started to have so much fun together. Orio has gained confidence and gets very excited when I come round and he can see me through the window.

Overall, volunteering for The Cinnamon Trust been amazing and better than I thought; being able to help dogs and people at the same time and seeing the difference we make in their lives is wonderful and very rewarding. I would recommend it to anyone with a love of dogs and people.

The work everyone at The Cinnamon Trust does is amazing, and such a valuable service that is much needed and wanted that more people should know about! I'm so happy and grateful that I am involved with this incredible charity and am very proud to play a small part in bringing some joy and light into these dogs' and their lovely owners' lives."



And **Rufus** (with a little help from **Shona McCowan**) writes from Edinburgh:

"Hi folks! My name is Rufus and I'm a 6-year-old cheeky chappy! I live in Edinburgh with my Mum, who loves me very much, and I love her too. Sadly, she doesn't



Rufus

keep too well and can't take me out for walks, so Mum contacted the nice people at The Cinnamon Trust who got on the case and found me 3 amazing Aunties – Felicity, Val and Shona – who now take me on lots of walking adventures!

My favourite things to do include (but are not limited to) playing with a ball, chasing a stick, splashing in my paddling pool and scratching my back on pretty much anything that will make it stop being SO itchy! Oh, and I love treats. I get lots of those from my Walking Aunties because I'm such a good boy.

I'm so happy that my Mum knew about The Cinnamon Trust. I'm very lucky too that I'm loved so

much by everyone who takes care of me. I make sure when I'm leaving weemails around the park or woods that I'm letting my other furry pals know about The Trust and how wonderful it is. My Walking Aunties help to spread the word too, so other dogs like me (and other Mums like mine) can get help if they need it.

I know that my Walking Aunties get huge enjoyment from taking me on adventures because they are always smiling at me and telling me what a good boy I am. So, everyone is happy and that's just great!

Hugs and licks,
Love Rufus x"



Not to be outdone, **Bullet** (with help from **Sarah Francis**) in Cheshire says:

Hello, my name is Bullet, Bully for short. I'm a Staffie Pointer cross and my name comes from my owner having been in the Army. I'm such a friendly boy; I love my kind owner, Mick, and I love it when my neighbours Jean, Graham and Mary come round to see me. I also love going for walks with my Cinnamon friends Sarah and Jan. So many people love me, and when the weather is nice we all get together for tea in the garden - I get cake and strokes all round!



Bullet

As you can see, I'm a beautiful, slim boy – I've lost lots of weight over the last year through my Cinnamon walks. I'm strong and fast, but gentle and patient, especially with children – a true credit to my owner. Even though I'm a senior dog, I could walk for miles and I love swimming in streams and ponds. I'm always happy and loving and I get excited about everything – my tail even spins like I'm going to take off!

When I go out for walks and trips, people love to come and say hello to me – they think I'm very handsome! My Cinnamon friend Sarah, who typed this up for me, has told me she is so grateful to Mick and The Cinnamon Trust for the opportunity to spend time with me and explore the lovely area I live in. I think she would really recommend volunteering for The Cinnamon Trust, especially because of the amazing dogs (like me!) and owners you'll get to meet!"



From West Sussex, **Sarah Dallimore** writes:

"I first found out about The Cinnamon Trust through my good family friend, Maureen Wilson. I had shared that I was interested in getting my own dog and she suggested signing up as a Cinnamon Trust volunteer in the meantime. Within a few days of my application being approved, I was asked if I wanted to meet Rabbie and his owner, Wendy - who very luckily are only 15 minutes' walk away from where I live. Rabbie was incredibly excited to meet me and was barking like mad



Rabbie

and showing me all of his squeaky toys. When we go out on walks he sniffs absolutely everything. When the weather was warmer we would walk to the park and have a little lie-down so Rabbie could take a rest and drink some water. He is not a huge fan of the cold or the rain so walks are much shorter now. When we get back home he knows he always gets a little treat - a Shmacko! He absolutely loves them. Sometimes he's a very good boy and will patiently wait for me to give it to him, other times his greed gets the better of him.

It's always lovely to see Wendy each week; we have a nice catch-up and she fills me in on what's happened since we last saw each

other. This year has been so challenging for everyone which is why I have so much admiration for Wendy who is always positive and will check on me to see how I am coping with everything.

Animals have been a very important part of my life growing up, and have brought me so much happiness and love, which is why I absolutely adore the concept of The Cinnamon Trust. I look forward to volunteering in whatever capacity I can and to continue spreading awareness about the amazing work the charity does."



Katie McSweeney is in Suffolk and she says:

"Sam is a 9-year-old golden Labrador, with a heart to match. He has a tail that never stops wagging and is the friendliest dog you could ever hope to meet. From our first walk back in November, I knew walking Sam would be an absolute pleasure. I met his lovely owner, Jane, at the door and Sam trotted out for his walk without hesitation, bringing his favourite toy duck with him. We set off across the fields and explored the local countryside, discovering footpaths I never even knew

existed, despite having lived in the area as a child. Sam certainly wasn't golden upon our return – in fact he resembled more of a chocolate Labrador, but it was nothing that couldn't be remedied by a good wash down and a towel! I always tend to think the amount of mud a dog collects on a walk is directly proportional to the amount of fun they've had! I have walked Sam every week since and we still haven't done the same walk twice!

As a home-educating mum of three children with autism, life can get pretty stressful, but volunteering for The Cinnamon Trust has really benefitted both my mental and physical health. It is wonderful to be able to help others by doing such a pleasurable thing as dog walking, especially during these tricky times of lockdown. Sam loves his adventures and always arrives home grinning from ear to ear. His owner, Jane, is always delighted to hear about how much he has enjoyed his walks and where he has been. My children look forward to coming on Sam's walks and have an exciting time exploring the countryside and getting to know their new doggy friend. They come with me, rain, snow or shine (we've had all three), as I believe it's important for them to learn that volunteering involves being reliable, committed and dedicated. As we walk the trails, we talk about what Sam might be thinking and feeling, and this helps them to understand body language and how others experience the world - two concepts which they find extremely challenging.



Sam

In their own words:

"I like walking Sam because he always brings one of his toys to show us and he wags his tail all the way round. He always takes us on nice walks, and he likes sniffing at everything!" – Joseph (age 10)

"I like walking Sam because we always go on good walks and he brings one of his toys to show us every time. I like watching how he sniffs all the smells. He always wags his tail." - Daniel (age 7)

"I like walking Sam because he always brings a toy to show us. I love his waggy tail." - Freya (age 5)

The toys and tail are clearly a big hit with the children! We feel proud to volunteer for The Cinnamon Trust and always recommend it wherever we go. We're looking forward to plenty more walks with Sam into 2021 and are so pleased that we can support his owner, Jane, during these challenging times."

And **Sabina Collier** from Devon sent this:



Dora

“Meet Dora, an 11 year old Dachshund. As a new volunteer with The Cinnamon Trust, meeting Dora and her lovely owner Sylvia was my first task - Dora’s in need of a walker and I’m more than happy to help her out! I had a very warm welcome from Dora who was fresh from the groomers - so a real ball of fluff - and after a chat with Sylvia, we set off for our first walk. I’d picked up a bag of treats on my way over, which were a big hit and came in useful when Dora decided there was a particular lane she didn’t want to walk down; for a pooch with such little legs she has a big character and makes her intentions very clear. So, she led the

way for the rest of the walk, which resulted in us going in a couple of circles and exploring all the areas that Dora decided were worth investigating.

I think it’s fair to say that we both enjoyed our first walk, and I’m really looking forward to future explorations with Dora. I’m all set to walk her twice a week, which gives me a much-needed break from working from home and a chance to get out and stretch my legs. I work for The National Trust, usually from any of the beautiful places we care for in the South West, but thanks to COVID19 I’ve been cooped up in the spare room on my laptop for the past 6 months, and it looks set to stay that way for a while yet.

Volunteering for The Cinnamon Trust seemed a perfect way to do something valuable with my spare time, help out lovely dogs and their owners, and tear me away from the laptop to get outdoors for some fresh air on a regular basis.”



A lovely view from **Arna Drammis** in Dorset:

“Hadleigh, a 7-year-old black Labrador, who cannot pass a river, a stream, a puddle, even, without the joy of swimming, jumping, splashing through, and, sometimes attempting to spectacularly leap across, often failing miserably, so that we both get soaking wet.

Hadleigh, who toys with me and keeps the ball between his paws, looking intently into the distance (pondering what, I wonder), until I get to within inches of him, when he grabs it and runs off, tail wagging and laughing at me. I can distinctly hear that laugh.

This good boy's tail never once stops wagging, as he samples the delightful smells of bushes, walls and all manner of unmentionable things. He often spends more time sniffing than walking, his concentration and enjoyment as intense as mine when I am relishing the taste of a new dish.

I've never heard a single bark from this lovely boy, who is happy to meet and play with every other dog or just walk by, if that's what they would prefer. He is an absolute treasure.

Max, another 7-year-old black Labrador, who knows Hadleigh of old. Max, in his yellow slicker, will tiptoe delicately around the smallest puddle. He loves to chase a ball, though, up and down the steepest hills, expecting me to chase after him. Another game, a chance to tease, to make me feel completely inadequate! What is it with these Labradors?

He likes to hold a ball in his mouth for the entire length of the walk, unless it gets muddy, then he nips the smallest piece between his teeth, keeping it sitting outside his mouth (like an extra bulbous nose) until we can find some way to clean it. It then promptly disappears inside again.

I've yet to hear Max bark, too. The most good-natured boy, who just loves to play with any of his many toys, although a ball and a throwy-stick, that's what a dog's life is really all about, isn't it? He is a complete sweetheart.

And me? I've had to invest in extra waterproof coats, a new pair of wellies and warmer hats and gloves, too, but walking these two beautiful boys just lifts my spirits. No matter what the weather, there is always something to make me smile, laugh out loud sometimes, and we talk the whole time (well, I talk. I presume they listen. They must do because they often answer, in my version of their voices!).

Then there are the many gorgeous days I would have missed without them. Christmas morning was simply stunning. And I meet such lovely people, all with their own dogs, all more than happy to stop for a socially-distanced chat (good job we humans don't have to sniff bottoms in greeting!).

Hadleigh and Max's owners, Nicky and Delphine, have been friends from way



Hadleigh



Max

back. Both very lovely ladies, who always have time for a chat with me, before or after a walk. They live in different villages now, seeing little of each other due to the COVID situation. I have acted as go-between; Christmas gifts from one to the other, eggs (sometimes) and just to be able to say, yes, I've seen them and they are fine.

I was dreading retirement. I love it now."



Matthew Hirst in West Sussex writes:

"During the early days of COVID19 I, like many, was furloughed from my cabin crew job. With the boredom of the days at home, and no more DIY, I started to think what else I could do.



Matthew Hirst with Merlin

I signed up for the NHS responder but this wasn't enough for me. One day, I viewed a post on the internet about helping out as a volunteer with The Cinnamon Trust. I was so excited - we always had pets through our childhood and also dogs of our own later on in life; the loyalty and gratification from them cannot be matched. Straight away, I applied to The Trust and promptly had a response to sign up. Everything was so straightforward and I was quickly signed up as a volunteer.

My first call for help was for Merlin, an old boy, but he is so keen to go out and have a good sniff along the way. We walk past the butchers and it always makes me giggle how he pulls to go into the shop and sulks and sits down when I say no and walk on.

I would highly recommend The Cinnamon Trust if you are an animal lover, no matter how much or little you are able to offer your assistance."



Kaz Pringle has been doing lots in Middlesex!

"The lockdown has been a horrid time for the elderly owners I walk for. Marion had a fall at home during the first week of lockdown and severely burnt her face on a radiator. She was hospitalised for a week and The Trust asked me to look after Roxy in my home which I did happily. After Marion came out of hospital she had to return on a weekly basis for treatment for six weeks. She has been incredible

and so brave, taking everything in her stride during this time. I have helped Marion as much as I can and I have been phoning her regularly to make sure she is okay. I still walk Roxy on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

Tony and Chris have had a tough time, too. Tony had a fall at home and broke his hip and was hospitalised. He had to have an operation which left Chris on her own with the two dogs. She was unable to visit Tony because of the restrictions at the hospital, and trying to get information about him was very difficult as the ward were unable to answer the phone very often. Tony came out of hospital with a chest infection, was admitted again, and is still there now.

I walk Toby and Ozzy on a daily basis as they are in the next road to where I work. As I work part-time, I go there when I finish and walk them, then sit in the garden at a distance with Chris to keep her company for a few hours. I have been cooking meals for Chris and Tony to give Chris a break as she is recovering from a stroke; I only live a mile from them, so I have been doing meals on wheels so to speak."



From Hampshire, **Jo Davidson** writes:

"I've always wanted my own dog, but working full time means unfortunately I can't commit to having one of my own. It was through my Great Auntie that I first heard of The Cinnamon Trust, as she is also a volunteer.

I have always wanted to volunteer my time and give back to my local community. With a love for dogs, what better charity to volunteer for than The Cinnamon Trust?

Almost immediately after signing up to become a volunteer in June 2019, I was contacted by The Trust to say there was an elderly lady local to me that needed help in walking her three year old Shug (Shih Tzu X Pug), Poppy. I was so excited that I had been given my first dog to walk!

As soon as I met her lovely owner, Elizabeth, and Poppy herself, I knew we were going to be best buddies!

I have joined a team of walkers and my day to walk Poppy is Saturday and I can honestly say she's an absolute dream to walk; she's well behaved, loves other dogs and people and gives the best cuddles! I usually walk her locally, but sometimes take her in



Jo with Poppy

the car to a larger field where she loves to have a good sniff and explore, as it's somewhere new.

Not only does volunteering with The Cinnamon Trust get you out and about in the fresh air, you get to meet new people and their dogs whilst walking and, most importantly, you know you're not only helping the dog but the owner, too. It's wonderful to know I'm giving something back to the community. I take pride in telling people I am a voluntary dog walker.

I am so pleased I became a volunteer, and hope that I can continue to walk Poppy for many years to come.

Thank you to The Cinnamon Trust for giving me the opportunity to make a new best friend in Poppy, thank you to Elizabeth for trusting me to walk your little furry companion, and most of all thank you to Poppy for making me smile every Saturday morning!"



Jessica Pope in Devon writes:

"Yogi is the perfect promoter of The Cinnamon Trust! Whenever we are on our walks we get stopped by passers-by wanting to pet him or touch his glorious mane of fur (I mean look at him. Why wouldn't you? He's such a handsome boy!). We use this as our chance to promote The Cinnamon Trust – Yogi will enjoy some fuss, while I explain that I am not Yogi's human but we are able to take each other on nice walks for friend and owner, Anne.



Jessica Pope and Yogi

We both enjoy long walks, especially by the beach or a nice big field as there are lots of different things to sniff! Sometimes I will bribe Yogi with a small treat as it can be distracting with all the new and exciting smells around, especially when there are

cows nearby. He is very clever and even started to respond to a clicker; I think you could probably get him to do anything as long as tasty treats are involved! He has also learned to pose very well for photos, and I'm sure he must know how handsome he is! Yogi's demeanour is lovely, he is so gentle and friendly and we have been able to make many new friends on our walks. Sometimes, we like to have a short break for a drink and to rest our legs and Yogi will usually tell me when it is time for our water break! Neither of us like the rain, but the wind doesn't bother us - in fact, Yogi loves it! He will bark with excitement when it's particularly gusty and I think he likes the way his fur looks and the cool breeze on his face.

I look forward to walking Yogi and seeing how excited he is to greet me at the gate when I pick him up. Sometimes he will jump up and bark with excitement at me to hurry up because I spend too much time talking to Anne. I like to think he is looking forward to seeing me and not the treats I bring!

Before Yogi, I walked a German Shepherd called Sadie. She was a beautiful dog with lots of energy. We would often go on jogs and runs which kept us both very fit. People were not so forthcoming with the idea of petting Sadie on our walks and would give us a very wide berth because she was so big and scary looking, but little did they know she was a gentle giant! Sadie taught me to be open to walking bigger and stronger dogs, and I would recommend it to anyone who is able. She had a very funny personality and would often enjoy pulling me up hills when I had run out of energy. Sadie also liked her treats and she would often lick my hands or face to say thank you. Sadly, Sadie passed away at the beginning of the year, but I am so grateful for the great times we had together and the friendship made with her owners, Gloria and Dennis, who I am still in touch with."



Sadie



And this from **Jenny Glover** in Cornwall:

"It has been my pleasure to walk Tony's dog Brandy, a 5-year-old Beauceron. I knew nothing about his breed until meeting him and have discovered he's a herding dog originating from the plains of Central France! I love his brown colouring, silky ears and gentle, playful nature. Tony tells me that Brandy hears my car coming and alerts Tony, in anticipation of his walk, which is so lovely. Our greeting ritual goes something like this: I park my car outside his house and open my car boot; Tony lets Brandy out of his front door and Brandy gallops straight to my car and jumps into the boot with no prompting. We have a smoochy hello and then we head off, more often than not to beautiful Siblyback Lake.



Jenny and Brandy

Brandy is a joy to walk; he's good both on and off the lead. He's a big fan of playing

with other friendly dogs, which is helping boost his fitness with a good run around with fellow four legged friends. During the global pandemic, helping out with dog walks for The Cinnamon Trust has given me a sense of adding value to the local community – it's the best kind of volunteering because you give a little, but receive heaps of good feelings too! I know it's helped with my own wellbeing by making sure I get outside for some fresh air, so I would recommend anyone who's thinking about dog walking in their local community to reach out to The Cinnamon Trust. I am already looking forward to my next walk; Tony said to me when I started that everyone always says that if they could, they would take Brandy home - he's not wrong!"



This is a good one! From **Genevieve Kiley** in Surrey....

"I have been a volunteer for The Cinnamon Trust for 11 years and my first assignment was Molly. My son, then aged 10, was desperate to have a dog but his Dad was adamant that we couldn't because we had a cat. I wanted to try and give him some of the experience I had growing up with my Dalmatian (I had just read 101 Dalmatians). My parents had Labradors but it was my choice of breed.

Valerie only needed help while she was having a hip replacement. However, she then needed the other hip done, so we carried on. Molly, an ex-racing Greyhound, did not need long walks but enjoyed getting out - my son loved it too. Unfortunately for Val, when recovering from the second op, Molly saw a cat and took off. Val suffered a dislocated shoulder and we continued walking Molly as Val's confidence had been dented. On our weekly walks, we would go in for a cup of tea and a chat. We shared stories from our lives and got to know each other better.

My son got older and, despite teenage years giving me arguments, he was always pleased to go walking with Molly (until A level studies and a part time job took his time). One memorable event was Valerie's surprise 90th birthday party that her niece had organised. We got to meet other walkers and shared stories about Molly.

When Val couldn't continue dog-walking, Molly became anxious about going out and a fair amount of persuasion was required. This was about to change....

Four years ago our cat sadly died and with one year left at school my son got his wish of his own dog, Dug, a rescue Jack Russell Terrier age 2. During our walking with The Cinnamon Trust, we met a dog being fostered called Duke, another Jack Russell. He was another hit with my son, so it seems appropriate we have one now. We carefully introduced Molly to Dug - first on a walk with my son which was a success, and then into the house where they got on well. Molly seemed to really

appreciate a walking companion and in the last four years she has started to enjoy her walks just as she did when we first started. Dug is her little protector – they greet each other very happily each week. On one occasion when Val had to go into hospital and Val's niece couldn't have Molly to stay, we did the honours just for a weekend. Dug managed to share his home and I am sure Molly found it easier that she had a familiar friend."

.... And Valerie's niece **Nicolette** says:

"The Cinnamon Trust was a marvellous find for my aunt, who was in her 80's when their wonderful volunteers started walking her greyhound, Molly. Now, 11 years later, The Cinnamon Trust is still involved, although with a few changes due to COVID-19!

Several times each week a volunteer walker would regularly arrive to take Molly for her stroll around the local paths, usually coming back for a cup of tea and a chat, which my aunt always looked forward to. Molly can be quite a character, and there have been times when she would pretend to be a donkey and refuse to walk another step! Turning round and heading for home with a volunteer in tow was the only answer!

Molly means everything to my aunt, who at 97 now sadly suffers from dementia. She is still able to have her dog by her side, largely due to the amazing walkers organised by The Cinnamon Trust."



Across to Suffolk now, and **Gemma Aldred**:

"I have always wanted to give back to the community and have over the years thought about what I could offer. I absolutely love animals and am very much a dog person. I enjoy walking so much that when I suggest going for a walk to my family and friends, they know that they are actually in for a hike! So, it was no-brainer that volunteering as a dog walker for The Cinnamon Trust was just the thing for me. Two years later, I am still loving it and even have my own assistant dog walker – my son, Zac.

My first placement was walking a pair of Toy Poodles named Dougal and Rupert. Both are very lovable characters and a pleasure to know. Dougal is happy to plod along, while Rupert very much tries to lead the pack - and mark every tree on the way! Unfortunately this placement is on hold at present during lockdown, but I hope that we will reunite in the future.

My second placement is with a Miniature Schnauzer named Misty. I introduced

Misty to my own dog, Poppy, who she quickly adopted as her best friend. When we first started our walks, Misty hated water so much that she even walked around puddles. But, with the 'bad' influence of Poppy, she now happily goes in streams and sea pools, loving every minute. Her human, Frank, is lovely gentleman and the dogs get treats.



Jenny with Twiggy and Zac

My third placement is with a Border Terrier named Twiggy. She has also decided that she loves Poppy, much to Poppy's disgust - she showers her with many kisses! Twiggy is a little character and is well known by everyone in the village where she lives. Her human, Jenny, is a wonderful lady that looks forward to our visits and we stop for a quick chat... oh, and biscuits!

I am elated that I applied to help this fantastic charity. I have met some lovely dogs and their humans. Knowing that they look forward to my visits and look out for me gives me great pride in what I do. An added bonus is that my son is learning that a simple thing like giving your time can make someone smile. It's a wonderful commitment, and I would recommend it to anyone."



Gabby Brooks writes from Kent:

"I have always loved dogs. As a child, we always had them and I am an absolute fan of canine company!

Sadly, due to work commitments, having a dog is not an option for me at the moment. One happy day, my husband sent me a link to The Cinnamon Trust. I was amazed; what a brilliant idea! Helping those who need some support, whilst also having the fun of a canine friend! I was sold.



Gabby and Dolly

Having completed an application, I received a message to contact a couple who live only a few minutes' walk from our house. One wet January evening, I set out meet them and of course, the real star of the show, their dog, Dolly!

Mike and Anita are the kindest, friendliest couple. Always smiling, always appreciative and it is always a pleasure to see them! Dolly is cuddly, sweet, bouncy and loves walks. On my first visit to Mike and Anita's home, I sat down and immediately Dolly jumped onto my lap! It was love at first sight. She is such a sweetheart and is always so excited for

our walks (I suspect she is also excited for treats I bring too!). I love spending time with her and have the privilege of walking her on Saturdays and Sundays. As a volunteer, your time can be flexible and worked around your own plans or events which is absolutely perfect.

Getting involved with The Cinnamon Trust has brought me nothing but joy. I could not recommend it more highly. Thanks to The Trust, I have the chance to get out and walk with the company of lovely dog. I am so grateful to have some new friends in my village – both human and canine!”



From Dorset, **Dawn Walker** says:

“When you think the word ‘Scrumpy’ describes a cider made from withered and undesirable apples, I was unsure what to expect on meeting Scrumpy: a 6 year old Border Terrier. She was neither of these descriptions.

On first meeting we were friends (turkey treats hidden in the pocket) and we have a lovely, amicable relationship. Scrumpy is a character who enjoys her walks. She can scent mark for England and can’t resist full-on detection work every 100 metres or so. Should someone pass by and not stop to interact, Scrumpy is most disappointed as she loves to be friends.



Scrumpy

It is good to be back walking a dog. I grew up with all manner of animals; cats, chickens, pigs as well as dogs. Although all have their merits, dogs just have that extra something for me - not like my gran’s budgie, whose extra something was dive bombing you from the lampshade or stripping wallpaper by the mirror! The dogs I have owned have been dear friends, so not being able to have one for many years (work and such like getting in the way) I decided that The Trust would be a useful way to help out others and also give myself the doggie fix I was missing.

It was a chance meeting in a cafe. We had a vacant chair at our table and an extra cup of tea and biscuits appeared, the owner asking if the chair was free. We struck up a conversation, and as she was a dog owner she introduced me to the work of The Cinnamon Trust. I looked for more information online, and took it from there.

A chance conversation with a stranger led to a happy pastime and a portion of Scrumpy twice weekly!”

Clare Bastable in Somerset sent this:

"I have always loved dogs and am very grateful that I discovered The Cinnamon Trust. Back in 2018, I lived with my sister for a year and she adopted a Miniature Schnauzer named Brae, who I helped raise from a puppy. I learnt a lot from this, and it also solidified my love of dogs. When I moved to the city of Bath, I decided that I would like to become a volunteer for The Cinnamon Trust to help dog owners that were unable to walk their dogs, and also to be able to spend time with a dog again.



Clare and Mia

I was very excited when The Cinnamon Trust called me and said that they had found me a dog to walk: a gorgeous Spaniel named Mia. I first met Linda and Mia in early September and was delighted that they were both so friendly. It's always a pleasure to chat and have a catch up outside her house before I head off with Mia, and Linda always has treats handy in case Mia fancies any on her walk.

Even though Mia is a 10-year-old Spaniel, she still has bundles of energy and is always eager to see me and my partner when we arrive to take her on her walks. She has a funny habit where she spins round and round in circles when she is happy, which is very cute and endearing - but you have to be careful not to get tangled up in her lead!

Unfortunately, Mia has a bad hip, so she can only be walked on the lead to prevent her from running around too much and injuring herself further, however this does not stop her from enjoying her walks. She loves to snuffle around as much as possible and greet passers-by.

Mia is the friendliest girl; she loves other dogs and is excited to greet all humans also. She's happy to walk in all weathers, rain or shine, and especially likes it when it is windy, as her big ears billow out in the wind. During our walks we always stop at the top of a hill overlooking a viewpoint, and we sit down on a bench together for cuddles. She loves the fuss and attention and lays a gentle paw on you to let you know when she wants more!

During this strange year of uncertainty, it's been really lovely to have such a positive thing to look forward to in walking Mia and having a catch up with Linda. I find spending time with animals, especially dogs, very calming and therapeutic, and it really lifts my spirits taking Mia on her walks.

I'm very glad I become a member of The Cinnamon Trust, and I am looking forward to many future dog walks!"

Charmaine Emmett in Dorset sent a super duper picture with her view:

“I joined The Cinnamon Trust in late 2018 because I wanted the opportunity to spend some of my time volunteering to help others and their pets. I find walking alone can be boring, but not when you are walking a dog: you meet lots of other people and their dogs and have the opportunity to stop and chat with the regular dog walkers. I have found these walks great for my mental and physical health. I went to college to study animal care and have owned many cats and other small animals, but never a dog so I was quite excited to start walking a Dachshund!

In February 2019, I was introduced to a 12-year-old Dachshund called Homer and his owner, Val. He needed four long morning walks every week which we both agreed and set up. On Mondays, Homer has an abundance of energy but as the week progresses he starts to tire more easily, so we walk a little slower. It's his walk and always at his pace, stopping when he finds something worth a sniff. He has definitely got stronger as a result of the long, regular walks.



Homer

Each time I arrive at Val's, Homer gets excited when I ring the buzzer and he is excitedly bounding, jumping, and happily stretching in the doorway to greet me with kisses. Homer is such a pleasure to walk and so well behaved on and off his lead. He's a placid and friendly little chap towards both humans and other dogs. His favourite things are chasing a squeaky ball on the beach, eating treats, and receiving lots of fuss and attention. Homer is not so keen if other dogs get too close when he's playing with his favourite ball in case it gets taken. Rainy days are a pet hate of his, looking a bit sorry for himself along the walk with rainwater dripping off his ears. Children especially love seeing Homer and squeal with happiness when he's wearing one of his jumpers or coats.

We are very lucky in Bournemouth to have a variety of walks from miles of golden beaches, nature trails, woodland walks, parks and cliff tops. However, Homer is always happy to pop his nose towards the door of the butcher's and bakery shops whilst licking his chops hoping for a little scrap.

After every walk, Val always tells me how much she greatly appreciates me coming to walk Homer come rain or shine, whether it's a bank holiday, half term, Easter, or Christmas. I get a lot out of walking Homer as well and I am happy that my few hours a week helps Val to keep her furry little companion.”

A lovely view from **Anna MacSorley** in Cardiff:

"In May this year, I began walking Lily, a friendly and joyful Border Terrier, for her Mum Sonia who isn't able to walk her very much. I'm one of a few Cinnamon Trust volunteers for Lily and have fallen in love with her along the way. She walks nicely on the lead, enjoys meeting other dogs and varies her route in the park around the corner from her house to keep me on my toes. If she could she'd chase all the squirrels there, but her lead puts paid to that particular form of entertainment! She sets off from home at quite a trot and keeps it up, apart from sniffing every smell she comes across. Once we're in the park she loves it if I run and gallops enthusiastically along with a big smile on her face. Sometimes she sits down and I squat next to her so she can lean on me and have a cuddle while we do some people watching.

Last year wasn't a very nice one with the death of both my parents, also a badly broken wrist which took a long time to heal (well into this year). So, I needed something else to focus on. Lily and Sonia came along and provided a breath of fresh air, enriching my life just in time. I look forward to Lily's company and then to Sonia's after our walk when we have a chinwag and a cup of coffee. Lily listens in, all while adoring Sonia and playing with her yellow rugby ball - we are in Wales after all! Sometimes she chews her red toy bone which she brings out when she has visitors. When Sonia talks to her she tips her head from side to side listening to every word.

In September this year, I received a request to walk Sandie, a Retriever cross rescue dog. I was surprised to discover her Mum was Sue, an old friend who I shared a flat with when I left home many moons ago. We'd been loosely in touch ever since we lived together and it's so good to see her every week since I began walking Sandie in October. Sandie's a big girl and I'm never sure who's taking who for a walk! She's a very affectionate sweetie and seems to love me as much as I do her. Again, I'm one of a few Trust volunteer walkers who take her out as Sue isn't able to walk Sandie any more.

Sandie has even more of a passion for squirrels than Lily and you need a firm grip on her lead to make sure she doesn't take off when she sees one. Having spotted a squirrel and been thwarted in her mission to rid the world of the grey furry things she then plays statues. She just will not budge until she's decided there's no chance of achieving her aim! This can take minutes and absolutely nothing distracts her unless it's another squirrel, of course. She lives facing parkland which is full of hundreds of squirrels racing up and down trees....

She relishes meeting other dogs, prancing on the spot and getting very excited; she's a very sociable dog and loves people as much as dogs and we spread the word about The Trust at the same time. Today, she made an elderly lady's day

when she stopped to say hello to her in her wheelchair! I enjoy Sandie's company and after our walk I usually have a coffee and a chat with Sue – plus I receive some big licky dog kisses, a paw and the occasional enormous hug from Sandie.

I'm retired, lucky enough to still be mobile and am indebted to The Cinnamon Trust for the opportunity to walk two beautiful dogs as well as the friendship I enjoy with Sonia and Sue which means so much to me."



And **Amanda McHale-Hilary** writes from Manchester:

"I had wanted to volunteer for The Cinnamon Trust for a couple of years, but things kept getting in the way of me applying. Cue COVID-19, and I suddenly had bags of time.

I applied and got approved as a volunteer. I can only commit to one walk a week at the moment, but I make sure my Cinnamon dog, Vita, gets a good walk. She lives in an area I'm not familiar with, so I'm enjoying exploring with her; she knows all the good places and guides me to where she wants to go. She even guides me to the best places to cross the road!



Vita

I've only been walking Vita for a few weeks, but she is so lovely and I enjoy our walks. Her owner, Peter, is friendly and I think he's enjoying our weekly chats at the door. He thanks me and I always thank him back for allowing me to walk his dog. I would be anxious allowing a stranger to walk my dog, so I see it as a great honour walking someone's beloved pet. They're trusting you with something so precious to them.

My journey with The Cinnamon Trust has only just begun, but I am finding it so rewarding. I phone Peter every week, a day before my visit, to check that he's OK and that he's still happy for me to walk Vita. I'm so pleased I can help Peter and Vita, in more ways than just a walk; it's the social side too."



Sid and Jane Evans in Cornwall write:

"The short term foster of Puff and William has been one of my favourites of the



Puff and William

year. As soon as we had the call that Puff and William were in the market for a short term foster, we knew the perfect pair had to come to us. From the get-go it was a wonderful foster; Puff and William soon found themselves exploring their temporary home town and keeping Sid on his toes with their much loved daily walks.

In the home the dogs were charming, adapting to their change of sleeping arrangements - the extra bodies being a paw and tail too big to allow Puff's request of sleeping at the pillow end. The only concern for the dogs was trying to understand why they had to share afternoon tea and biscuits with Sid and Jane! They tried various

methods to twist an arm, including William adopting his now famous meerkat-esque upright stance - this routine could not be altered!

Throughout, The Trust stayed in touch with us and Thelma to ensure she knew the boys were in safe hands. Thelma's main concern was her beloved companions, so it was a pleasure to pass on photos so she could see that they were happy and keeping their foster parents in check! We have learnt that this is what makes a foster with The Cinnamon Trust so successful. When the boys returned home, we presented a photo album of Puff and William to their mum as a parting gift and to show that they had a tremendous time in sad circumstances.

The boys left foster healthy and happy, albeit Puff a little long in the coat with all the doggy hairdressers being locked-down. The boys were a memorable twosome in a portfolio of fantastic fosters over the years. Once they had returned home, the house seemed empty, and we would walk around asking – "where are they?". William's lap-warming services and Puff's loving company are dearly missed.

As I am writing this we have just had a call to ask if we can foster a little Jack Russell called Harley next week, so we are going to put our feet up until he arrives!"



And this is from **Barbara Dale** in the West Midlands and her volunteer **Suzanne Ward** – a short-term foster:

"In October 2019, I was told I needed a total knee replacement. I am 87-years-old, with sole responsibility for a much loved 11-year-old Westie, Murphy.

I knew I could put him into kennels, but as I wouldn't be able to drive for six weeks after my operation, the thought of leaving him there for so long made this decision a non-starter. I popped into my vets for advice, and spoke to the vet nurse, Amy. I will forever be in her debt, as she suggested I get in touch with The Cinnamon Trust.

After a friendly chat with a young man in Cornwall called Kyle, I soon got the news that a lady named Suzanne would be getting in contact with me and Murphy. At their first meeting, it was love at first sight for Murphy; he trotted off with her, and never looked back!

As the COVID crisis took hold, my surgery was delayed for a year. Suzanne continued to walk Murphy while I waited which was another weight off my mind.

When I finally got a date for my surgery, Suzanne took Murphy into her own home. He just got into her car without a backward glance. I received regular updates and photos from her.

I cannot describe the peace of mind I had knowing he was safe and well. When Suzanne finally brought him home, he sat behind the door and cried when she left but he was soon back on my lap and having a cuddle.

Cinnamon Trust, you are doing a wonderful job. Thank you."

Suzanne writes:

"I would like to thank The Cinnamon Trust for introducing me to Barbara and her delightful Westie, Murphy. We got on well from our first meeting, and I thoroughly enjoyed having a chat with her when Murphy and I returned from our regular walks – he loves to sniff every bush, tree and lamp post!

When Barbara received a date for her surgery, we were able to arrange that Murphy would come and stay with me. They both came to visit so he would know where he was, and Barbara would have peace of mind that he would be safe and well cared for.

The night before Barbara's admission to hospital, I called to collect Murphy. He came with everything he would need plus written instructions which were very useful. He jumped into my car, I fastened his seat belt, and off we went.

On arrival at home, he had a good look around before he settled into his bed for a nap. This was the beginning of a lovely time together, with regular walks and treats for being such a good boy. He loved it when I had visitors, especially when my grandson came; they got on really well.

I knew I would miss him on his return home, but was glad to see Barbara safe and sound and back home with her dear boy.”



Rosie Brooks sent this from Cornwall:

“I have volunteered for The Cinnamon Trust for just over a year now and have helped walking a dog, Ursi, every week. This has given me much joy but nothing compared to my first foster.



Bessie is a 13-year-old cat who is full of so much love and character. When she first arrived she was very timid as you would expect and slept behind the washing machine for the first week, but always came out when called for strokes and food. Within a week she moved to sleeping in my wardrobe, within 2 weeks she was sleeping all over the house and was much more confident and settled. She is such a sweet and brave cat and follows me everywhere now and makes the sweetest sounds.

Bessie has been in my care for about 6 weeks now, and today she is returning to her owner Marlene who has been very ill but her main concern has always been Bessie and returning home to her. Although I will miss Bessie terribly, I am so happy that I was able to give Bessie a happy home even for a short while and that Marlene and Bessie can now be reunited.

The Cinnamon Trust were so supportive throughout this foster and The Trust was always on hand to answer any questions and constantly checked on Bessie's progress. After such a special and rewarding experience with Bessie I will happily foster again.”



From Warwickshire, **Maggie Newell** writes:

“I have been walking Minkie on a weekly and, more recently, twice weekly basis since 2018. Minkie is an adorable little dog, she is mostly Border Terrier and Cairn Terrier with a smattering of Schnauzer!

From the start Minkie was enthusiastic about her walks, but a few months into our relationship she seemed to take a dislike to walking in the local streets. So now we

go to the park, where she rushes around on a long lead, sniffing and investigating. She and her owner, Kate, have a very strong bond, so Minkie is always happy to be home at the end of her walk, greeting Kate with much affection.

In January this year Kate was admitted to hospital and The Cinnamon Trust rang to see if I could take Minkie for short term fostering. My husband, Adrian, had met Minkie and he was quite happy for her to come to stay. At this stage I should probably confess to being an unapologetic 'cat person'. In fact, the reason I joined The Trust was to offer support, such as feeding and fostering to cat owners. I did, however, say that I was prepared to walk small, well behaved dogs. I have never owned a dog, so did feel a bit anxious about how things would work out. I needn't have worried as Minkie settled in very quickly. One of my concerns was how she would cope with stairs. She's lived in a bungalow for several years, so I worried that she might be at risk of falling. She had no problems and was soon scampering up and down. She enjoyed local walks from our house and soon became familiar to the neighbours.

When Kate moved from Hospital to a Rehabilitation Centre I was able to take Minkie to visit. Once again, she endeared herself to everyone she met. On this occasion Minkie stayed for 5 weeks.

Minkie came to stay again more recently when Kate unfortunately had to go into hospital again, but this time for a much shorter period. COVID regulations were in place so there was quite a lot to think about, but everything worked out well.

Since she returned home, Kate and I have been very careful, sticking to all the guidelines. Meeting on the doorstep has worked well, particularly as we have been blessed with reasonable weather.

I'm not sure a confirmed 'cat person' can ever be converted, but Minkie has worked her charms on Adrian and myself. We look forward to seeing her and are happy to foster her again should the need arise.

Quite apart from the joy of knowing Minkie, I have got to know Kate – an amazing and interesting lady with a wicked sense of humour.

So, thank you Minkie, Kate and The Cinnamon Trust for enriching my life."



Drs Kay Flatten and **Hilary Matheson** write from Monmouthshire:

"My wife and I have walked and fostered dogs for The Cinnamon Trust for over 15 years, so we know the joys dogs bring to both owners and volunteers. But

nothing, and I mean nothing, compares to Herbert our current foster dog. He is a Parsons Jack Russell Terrier with all that entails. He came to us when his owner was taken to hospital and likely to have a long recovery. Herbert's regular Cinnamon Trust Volunteer Walker took him home, but with three other dogs in the home that Jack Russell energy was too much! A new chapter in Herbert's life was about to unfold.



Being dogless and locked down meant we were so lonely. So, we called Debbie at The Cinnamon Trust and offered ourselves up for anything that might come in needing help. She said that she was just working on a case that had come in so our timing was perfect! The Cinnamon Trust wrote a letter approving our emergency transport in case

we got stopped, and we took a selfie of us driving Herbert to our home.

We started with three walks a day and a wake up and pre-bedtime garden visit. That sorted out the chance of odd accidents and after an accident on day one, and another on day two, he knew the ropes. We were told that his walk included commands like "Halt" and "Cross" at roads which we carried on. It was obvious that he could not be off lead because we saw his Terrier DNA pop out when squirrels dashed around Caldicot Castle Country Park on one walk! We both noticed he would turn his ears off if he was not on a lead and a squirrel could easily lead him into danger.

He loves to sit in the sun in the bay window watching dogs and life on Sandy Lane. He also likes a ball toss in the living room and he retrieves nicely. Because of this we decided to take him to Caldicot's dog field where squirrels dare not come and cars are out of sight and sound. We played fling-it with a tennis ball and WOW! He was off like a shot, grabbed the ball on the bounce and brought it back. He is amazing!

We have had Herbert for a week and all three of us are having fun and lots of cuddles. Thank you Cinnamon Trust for letting us borrow Herbert, we are bored no more. He has obviously been dearly loved by his owner and we have realised what a great little companion he must be to John. We will look after him for as long as needed and wish John a speedy recovery."

And **Jackie Eager**, on behalf of her brother **John**, says:

"Just after World War Two, my parents took on a beautiful Alsatian dog, whose owner was no longer able to care for him, owing to ill health. My mum was quite

nervous about dogs but this soon passed and Zamba became their beloved companion. He also became the dear friend to me and my brothers. This is definitely where our love of dogs started.

As the years went by, we scattered to different parts of the country and our love of dogs continued. My elder brother had retired to a beautiful area in the South West and got himself a lovely Parsons Jack Russell, called Herbert. Sadly, and despite only being in his 60's, his health started to deteriorate. Living alone and a very long way from family, he had turned to The Cinnamon Trust for support.

This decision took on momentous significance, when one of his volunteers from The Cinnamon Trust made her weekly call on my brother and his dog. Finding there was no reply to her knock on the door, she raised the alarm. This action may well have saved my brother's life, as he had collapsed the night before with a stroke and his condition had become very serious.

I cannot praise the help and support that we have received from The Cinnamon Trust enough: from the volunteer who found my brother and helped with Herbert initially, to the personnel at HQ and our liaison, Debbie, who helped to find foster parents for Herbert.

Finally, I want, of course, to add a huge thank you to the kind foster parents, who are looking after Herbie at a difficult time. We are dealing with the ramifications of our brother's stroke and he is still very much on the long haul to recovery. Knowing that Herbert is safe and in a loving home has comforted my brother enormously, and given us peace of mind, while we support him.

Thanks again to all those who give their time, skills, knowledge and also donations to help pet owners in times of need."



From Hampshire, **Diana Stenning** writes:

"Darcy the Pug came into our home and our hearts in September, and stayed for a few weeks whilst mum Gill was in hospital recovering from a hip operation

My husband and I, and our children Stanley (14) and Rose (11), fell in love with her immediately. Full of smiles and cuddles, she would follow us around the house and sit with us while we worked and was always keen to help Rosie with her homework.



Darcy with Rose

Darcy is the second dog we have fostered for The Cinnamon Trust. Our first was Charlie, a Bichon who would go crazy if he saw a cat and who loved exploring; a very different character to Darcy. We had Charlie for quite a few months as his owner had a series of operations, but it was so lovely to see them together when he eventually went home to his Mum, Ruth.

It's not just looking after Darcy and Charlie which has been so enjoyable – we've made friends with their owners and we still keep in touch and take the dogs out for walks.

While there is always a moment of sadness when it is time for doggy to go home, ultimately we're happy that they are being reunited with their beloved owner and pleased that we have been able to help in some small way."



Now, let's catch up with some of our lifelong foster pets. First, **Harry** has a blissful life with **Monika Jasinska** in Herefordshire after the death at 100 of his owner, **Linda**.

"With a loud meow on cue at 7.22am, Harry wakes up, and so do we. Unfortunately, with him being slightly deaf, he doesn't hear us calling him, so he continues, getting louder and louder. With a brief yoga stretch he'll continue his meow a few more times before deciding we haven't heard him and we need waking up. What better way to do this, and start the day, than jumping up onto the bed and snuggling in for a morning cuddle and purr.



Harry asleep

After his breakfast and morning constitutional, he'll head back upstairs and settle in for a nap on the bed in the one-and-only sunny spot and can be seen dreaming of days gone by: of catching mice, birds and bats as his tail and paws twitch in excitement. After this energetic start to the



Harry sunning himself

day, he'll wander into the office to join the late morning video conference calls, before deciding it's time for a grooming session - usually just as it's my turn to present for my work colleagues. With the attention drawn away from him, Harry will go for his daily walk, stopping in the garden for a quick catnap on top of the shed, chasing the neighbour's cat and finally walking his lap of honour

around the house, advising us of his return with a very loud meow or two.

Harry and I have grown very fond of each other and enjoy our time together. As he gets older, his character becomes more unique. Where most cats bring home mice or birds, Harry's recent presents have been corn on the cob and a double quarter pounder cheeseburger! His recent eye removal hasn't stopped him from enjoying himself – it gets him a few more cuddles from guests, which he absolutely loves.

If he was human, he'd be an adorable grandad. An old handsome war hero, wearing an eye patch, displaying his medals proudly. Sitting by a fireplace in a pub telling tales of the war and the good old days and enjoying every moment he has.

I'm so happy that I decided to help The Cinnamon Trust and Harry fostered me. Without his toothless smile, the glint in his one eye and the purr of happiness that I get, my life would be a lot emptier.

For anyone willing to help, whether it is volunteer dog walking, which is how I started, to fostering a cat, I highly recommended it and if I could, I would do more. I'm sure Harry would agree.”



Fleur Harris in Oxford writes movingly about her **Mum, Maureen, and Poppy**.

“My Mum is quite elderly but has lots of family support around her. She lives on her own and having lost her last pet she was very lonely. Times had changed since we last looked for a dog and it wasn't easy. Despite our promises of support, and the fact that we would take on any pet if anything happened to her, we were turned down by all the rescues because of Mum's age. We could perhaps have got a puppy, but there was no way Mum could manage that. With lots of let-downs, I got the number for The Cinnamon Trust from a lady I met who had fostered a Poodle for them.

I gave the number to my Mum and the look she gave me was one of defeat. I encouraged her to just give them a ring, to try just once more. My Mum called me the following morning so excited, she said that there was a Poodle cross that might be right for her, but they wanted to speak to me as well. Within 10 minutes we had a call from Debbie at The Cinnamon Trust. We were asked a few questions about Mum and the support we offer and we were told that they would be arranging a home check with Mum. They spoke about Poppy who was a Poodle with poor eyesight and had diabetes. Poppy's Mum had become blind and could not give her the injections she needed, so she needed someone who could help with this. Poppy also needed someone to be with her a lot as she had separation



Fleur with Poppy

anxiety. I quickly added that I would help Mum to learn to do the injections as I had a lot of experience with doing that. Poppy just sounded adorable and perfect; could this be the one? Mum was so excited, she wasn't fazed by any of Poppy's medical problems: she just wanted a dog to love.

We were so relieved that Mum passed the home check and were incredibly happy when Poppy came bounding into my Mum's house like she had always been there. Even though she can't really see, you would never know it as she takes everything in her stride. Poppy is loved by us all and is definitely part of the family; we all pitch in with her care. There are a lot of us, so we all take turns taking her for walks which she loves, lots of vet's visits and to the groomers!

Our family couldn't imagine life without her, she has brought life back into our Mum and thank goodness she arrived just before lock down. We cannot thank The Cinnamon Trust enough, they have been fantastic. Everything has been provided by them for Poppy and we have had plenty of advice. Thank you Cinnamon Trust from ALL of us."



Fraser has made **Lynn Hay** in Lancashire very happy:

"I have known about The Cinnamon Trust and its work for several years and often thought that if I ever found myself without a dog, I would apply to become a volunteer walker. When a friend and fellow dog lover, Christine Battison, started to volunteer, we regularly walked together; she with the gentleman Flynn, a beautiful Greyhound and I with Pascha, my rehomed Whippet.

Sadly, in April of last year, Pascha became very ill, very suddenly, and I was forced to make that dreadful decision to have him put to sleep. The grief I felt was so deep and raw, at the time I thought I could never share my life with another dog for fear of having to go through the same unbearable heartache. So, I decided to become a volunteer walker, all the time continuing to accompany Christine and the lovely Flynn on their walks and walking him myself when Christine was unavailable.

In December 2019, an acquaintance of mine contacted me as she had learned of Fraser, a Whippet boy in the care of The Trust whose owner had died, and for whom

a long-term fosterer was being sought. Up until that point in time, I had not even considered having another dog, but I just knew I had to apply to give Fraser a home.

In the early evening of January the 5th this year, Fraser arrived at his new home with me down here on the Hampshire coast and I have to say he settled in immediately. He soon made friends with my sister's rescued retired Greyhound (his cousin, Tess!) and was enjoying his walks alongside Flynn.

I just wanted to say a huge 'thank you'. Fraser has proved to be an absolute joy and having spoken to his previous owner's son, I know he too is grateful to The Trust and comforted by the knowledge that his father's beloved dog has found a new home by the seaside."



Katherine Davies in Devon is bewitched by **Tiger** and **Tigger Twinkle Toes**!

"Having lost our beloved 14-year-old cat in October 2019, we very much missed having a furry housemate and while researching The Cinnamon Trust for a friend, I suddenly noticed a picture of a cat on the Facebook page. I had no idea there may be a feline fostering opportunity, and excitedly left a hesitant message on the machine. I was amazed when I got a call asking whether I was interested in taking on a cat or cats and immediately said "yes!" without knowing any of the finer details.



Tiger

Tiger and Tigger Twinkle Toes were picked up by me a fortnight before the COVID19 lockdown and they were terrified by all they'd recently experienced. Their owner had died suddenly and they had been upset by people coming and going in the house. Once released from their baskets, they made a dash for the nearest cupboard and squeezed themselves underneath. That's how it was for the first week, with them even dismantling the kitchen footboards to hide themselves - we spent a lot of time lying on the floor rattling Dreamies packets.

As they became braver we were stunned by their movie star good looks, both being gorgeous silver tabbies, and they were soon exploring and training up their new staff to



Tigger Twinkle Toes

provide their favourite foods and very specific tummy or head rubs. We learned quickly and it was wonderful to see them confident in their space with their tails held high. Their first ever taste of a garden at 9-years-old was fantastic, even if they did get a bit over enthusiastic about eating grass, resulting in little offerings of 'grass in brine' for me!

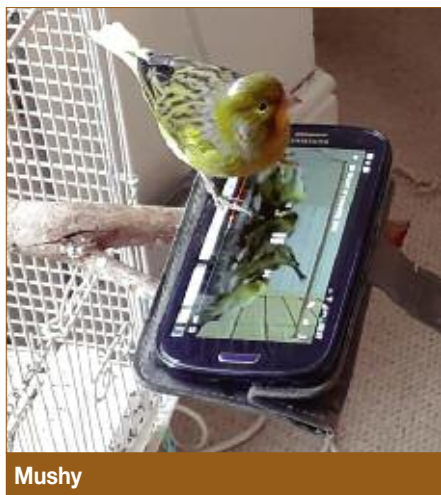
Tiger lives up to his name and is an enormous vocal character, very cheeky especially when it comes to food; he can't wait to get his paws on it. Tigger remains nervous but is such a sweet, gentle girl and she puts her brother in his place when he's too boisterous. I am incredibly grateful to have had their company through lockdown and can't imagine our home without them now. I'd recommend fostering for The Cinnamon Trust to anyone who loves animals. It makes us sad to consider how our two fluffies would have fared if taken to a rehoming centre as they would have hated to be separated - scared or shy cats don't do well.

Thank you, Cinnamon Trust, for letting us care for Tiger and Tigger Twinkle Toes."



And little **Mushy** in Worcester with **Jayne Parlett** loves the mobile phone!

"I thought I would update you on little Mushy who is doing very well!



Mushy

I think he's enjoying me being at home most of the time now and is getting bolder every day. Overnight, he lives in my 2nd bedroom (I'm in a ground floor maisonette) but he's recently discovered that I leave the door slightly ajar to allow air to circulate and that if he hops through on the floor he can get out.... which he now does on a regular basis!

He loves his daily fix of YouTube on my old phone, he taps at the screen if he likes the canary on there and if he sees something flash up, he'll tap on that too! Mostly, he skips to the next video, but sometimes I find

him changing the settings on the phone, creating a profile on Google+ and, once, I found him on the booking page of a car manufacturer for a test drive! Can you imagine me explaining that away when the garage phone me up to say my car's ready for a drive!

He loves phones so much; if I sit down with my phone and start looking on there

he'll come and land next to me in case there's a chance of a canary video on there too!

Cheeky monkey! Who'd have thought a little thing like him could be so entertaining."



Toni Meyers in Essex has a love story to tell:

"I thought you might want to know that Coco Rabbit has now got himself a girlfriend!

Coco lost his previous Wifebun in April and, although he put a brave face on over the summer, once the nights began to draw in I think he started to miss company. I had been trying all through lockdown to get a slot at one of the rabbit rescue charities so he could meet another single bunny looking for a Husbun, finally getting a chance in mid-December.

He was introduced to Fuzzy (known as Snickers at the rescue) and although, as in all the best love stories there was a bit of fur-pulling at first, the course of true love ran smoothly in the end.

Fuzzy was used by a commercial breeder before her rescue so she is very shy of humans and hides in the den when she sees me coming. Coco is being very supportive of her though and will give her encouraging little face licks.



Coco and Fuzzy

Even though there is quite an age difference (Fuzzy is only 3), she and Coco have been enjoying snuggly evenings in their den and sharing treats. But don't worry, Cinnamon, it's platonic snuggling (they've both been fixed) but they enjoy it all the same!"



Seasoned lifelong fosterers **Hazel Schofield** and **Steve Smith** write about **Bonnie** from Norfolk – and others!

"We are very proud to be long term foster carers for The Cinnamon Trust. We've been with them since 2015.

Before joining The Cinnamon Trust, we looked after friends' and family's pets and fostered dogs from a local animal sanctuary. I was ready to have one of our own, but with limited funds we couldn't afford it. Also, our speciality is looking after those who are older or need extra TLC, so vet bills would always be likely and, possibly, very costly. Then we heard about The Cinnamon Trust and applied to volunteer as long term foster carers. We said we would be more than happy to consider a pair. We are both dog lovers and had grown up with dogs as children. I'm animal mad and was desperate to have a dog in our lives again and not just for a few weeks here and there.

It all happened so quickly; we got a call about a gorgeous older companion pair who were in need of a long term foster home - their forever home. We had booked holidays which sadly weren't dog friendly, but the short term foster carer was happy to have them for a bit longer so they joined us on the 14th July 2015. That's when we met Charlie and Petra. They'd been together for at least 5 years with their elderly owner in Wales who had passed away. Charlie was 11-years-old and a Border Terrier Cross and Petra was a 10-year-old Jack Russell Terrier Cross. Petra was the smaller of the two, but big on attitude! It was clear who the boss was! They settled in quickly; Charlie loved attention and cuddles but was his own boss, happy to go off to the guest room when he'd had enough. Petra took a little while longer to come out of her shell but was like my shadow. She slept on our bed and didn't like being alone. We were a family at last.

We sadly lost Petra to cancer November 2016. We were very worried about how Charlie would cope without his companion, but he loved being the only dog in the house and getting all the love and attention. He still liked his own space i.e. the guest room, and was most miffed when he got turfed out when we had guests to stay and he had to sleep in our room!

Charlie had a few health issues, mainly arthritis, but otherwise was a very happy chap with a healthy appetite! It was very hard when we lost him. He had been such a big part of our lives and we loved him dearly. He died following two strokes in November 2018. We still miss him very much.

Soon after we lost Charlie, The Cinnamon Trust were in touch about a lovely elderly Miniature Poodle in need of short term foster care. In the end that didn't work out, but we did become her long term foster carers when her owner passed away from cancer.

Bonnie entered our lives in December 2019. She took a little longer to settle in and needed lots of patience and unconditional love. She had been with her owner since a pup and was obviously upset by his death.

34 Bonnie was visually impaired, but has since become blind. She is about to

celebrate her 13th birthday next month and is a remarkable girl, coping with her limited vision incredibly well. Her hearing and sense of smell are tip top, nothing gets past her - especially a bacon sandwich! She's a real character, very entertaining and lovable. She is, simply, our world. Specialising in looking after elderly pets does mean that they may not be with us for very long, but we strive to make their time with us the best it can possibly be. The Cinnamon Trust are an amazing charity and help support us through the difficult times; even when Bonnie needed emergency surgery over Christmas last year they were there for us.



Hazel and Bonnie

I would urge anyone to consider becoming volunteers for The Cinnamon Trust, it will be the most rewarding experience ever no matter in what capacity you're involved."



Ollie brings sunshine into **Gabrielle Cavill's** life in Cornwall:

"From the day I arrived into the world, 70 years ago, I have always had the 'company' of pets – and a lot of them! All shapes and sizes, but all unique in their own way. At 10 years old, I was given my first miniature Dachshund, Bambie. He arrived late one night and I took him straight back to bed with me – where he stayed for the next 11 years!

Several moves and a large variety of pets later, we adopted our third and fourth Dachshunds. They came to us at 4-years-old and had impeccable manners. Our garden at this time was 3 acres and filled with rescue animals, a mix of feather and fun! They adapted well and loved coming around with me to feed and care for our 'house guests'. At night, I fed the foxes and badgers that came into the garden and the dogs never tired of watching them through the garden room window – they never barked, but there was a lot of tail twitching. Sadly, we lost Freddie at 13 years but Willy, his brother, made the grand old age of 19 ¾ years. By this time we had retired and moved to Cornwall. Thinking I was doing the right thing by the next dog I waited a year to 'settle and sort'. This proved to be one of the biggest mistakes – life without a dog was unbearable.

Having heard of The Cinnamon Trust through my fundraising days at RSPCA

Blackberry Farm in Buckinghamshire, I contacted Moira the 'foster lady' and was on my way to 'adopting' Dachshund number 5. Ollie was almost 8 years old when she joined our family and my first long-haired Dachshund. Small, but perfectly formed, and boy didn't she know it!

It took her no time to let us know her house rules. "I sleep on your bed and all other furniture, and I come first in the pecking order. Well, before that pesky cat" – poor Simba has adapted!

Somehow she let us know she has a liking for scrambled egg and smoked salmon and doesn't say no to a milky coffee.

Never has it been more important than now to have the companionship of a pet, both for our mental and physical wellbeing. It didn't take lockdown to teach me that.

It's thanks to The Cinnamon Trust that this can be achieved for so many. Ollie has brought the sunshine back into my life and I can never thank The Cinnamon Trust enough for trusting me to long-term foster Ollie, our little wonder dog!"



Benji is also in Cornwall, with **Fiona Herring**:

"We joined The Cinnamon Trust last year, and were delighted to receive our first call in August to temporarily foster a lovely natured Collie called Benji. His owner, Dee, had terminal cancer and had to go into hospital. I will always remember this



Benji

delightful but rather rotund dog, with hair like a sheep, bounding up to us. We live in Liskeard so there were plenty of fantastic walking opportunities on nearby Bodmin moor, local woodland and the beach, where we learned of his obsession with water (even though he refused to swim!). We really had started to grow fond of him.

Over the next few months, we looked after Benji on and off as Dee had frequent trips to hospital. Benji was her top priority and knowing he could come to us and return to her at the drop of a hat meant a lot to her. We had a chat as a family and agreed with The Cinnamon Trust that, should the need arise, we would take Benji on with The Trust's support. When Dee passed away she knew this and we hope that it gave her peace of mind knowing he would spend his

life with us. We will always be grateful to Dee for taking the time and dedication to mould Benji into such a trusting, sweet-natured animal after the difficult start that he had had in life.

Since then, Benji has firmly cemented his place in the family, and his physical transformation has been better than we could have imagined. The pounds have dropped off him – he has gone from panting after a 10 minute walk on the beach to accompanying my partner on distance runs on the moor! His favourite activity is, without a doubt, swimming. He would only dip his paws into the water when he first came, but now he loves nothing more than to swim out and retrieve sticks from the water until we have used all the sticks in sight! He has no problem fetching the stick, but has not yet mastered bringing it back to us!

As I write this, he is lying outside in the sun with another dog from The Trust that we are temporarily fostering. We will forever be thankful to The Cinnamon Trust for introducing this wonderful dog into our lives.”



In County Durham **Misty** is being spoilt by **Tony** and **Debbie Mason**:

“We had discussed getting a dog for a long time but felt with work commitments, and my unpredictable shift pattern as a midwife, it was unfair. However, as the kids became teenagers and able to help with the commitments that a dog brings, we decided the time was now right for our family. I had mentioned this in passing to my friend Louise, who was a volunteer for The Cinnamon Trust, and she told me that the dog she walked was in need of a home. She said “she’s a gorgeous dog and will fit in with your family perfectly!”

Misty lived with Elspeth who was being helped by The Cinnamon Trust. Sadly, she had been admitted to hospital and the prognosis wasn’t good. Elspeth’s family lived a long way away and, as Misty doesn’t tolerate cats very well, Louise was unable to foster her herself. She was temporarily in the care of another Cinnamon Trust volunteer, but she needed to be settled as soon as possible.



Misty

To my surprise, my husband Tony seemed immediately interested in providing a forever home for a dog in need. I had anticipated having to do some real persuading! He suggested that Louise and Misty come round for a cup of tea. So, that’s what happened.

We needed a few home checks doing, which were successful, and on a cold Saturday in February, Misty arrived. She walked to the kitchen, noting the fridge. She then realised the log burner was on in the lounge, identified her 'spot' and literally made herself at home! We all fell in love immediately. The rest is history, as they say!

A few weeks later, we walked to the cemetery to pay our last respects to Elspeth. Misty got to see people she recognised and they got to make a fuss of her and meet me; after all, there were a lot of people worried about her future.

Eighteen months later and it is difficult to recall life without her! She enjoys a small dog treat after her walks and a bit of milk in her bowl before bed! She will walk for miles and sometimes we meet up with Louise and her dog, Ted! One of Misty's favourite past times is chasing squirrels, but the squirrels in our garden are very agile and as she barks at them from 20 feet away, they get a bit of warning to hide!

As a family, we feel we have gained so much from fostering a dog. We get so much more exercise and fresh air, get to spend quality time together, get to meet people we would never have met and our stress levels have most definitely decreased.

It's fair to say Misty is very spoilt, but I think we are too. We adore her and have never looked back since we agreed to foster her. She is the best decision we have ever made."



Barbara Spellacy in the West Midlands and **Holly** are very happy:

"Debbie from The Cinnamon Trust contacted us on a Monday afternoon to ask if we would consider fostering a little Jack Russell Terrier as her owner had sadly passed away. She urgently needed a home and we agreed to take her as we had lost our previous foster dog two years earlier who was also from The Cinnamon Trust.

We knew we would receive all the help and support we may need. Someone is always on the end of the telephone and all vets costs would be covered by The Trust. Debbie informed us that Suzette, one of Holly's Cinnamon Trust dog walkers, would bring her to us from Worcester. This little girl came into our lives the following day, where it was a meet and greet in the garden, observing social distancing due to COVID19. Initially she was a little nervous and unsure, but that was understandable as she had lost everything, the poor girl.

She has settled into a good routine, although it continues to be a learning curve for all three of us. Her confidence has grown and she will now sit on a lap for a fuss and also enjoys a tummy rub. Although 9-years-old, Holly is active and likes to be out and about walking and exploring. She loves everyone she meets and expects a fuss, wagging her little tail furiously. She has become a local celebrity, sporting her Cinnamon Trust lead band. She also loves the garden and enjoys sunbathing. We have grown to love Holly and she has made an incredibly happy difference to our lives.



Barbara and Holly

Holly had been with us seven weeks when Suzette visited, it was a lovely reunion and Holly was delighted to see her. I told Suzette that I was writing a piece for the newsletter and she asked me to add the following from her: "It is lovely to see that Holly has settled in marvellously well. She is secure and content, and so obviously loved and well cared for. Her new environment means lots of fresh experiences and walks; she has even lost a little weight which suits her. I walked Holly for her Mum Jean for three years, and it was so important to me to see her in her new home. It is a lovely home for her and wonderful that she can settle properly for the rest of her doggy days."



Thank you, Cinnamon Trust, for trusting us to give Holly her forever home."



Amy Witwicki in Wiltshire is besotted by **Amber, Ozzie** and **Teddy**:

"I lost my rescue cat, Candy, in September 2018 after 10 wonderful years and it wasn't long before the house was definitely missing a feline presence. As a Cinnamon Trust dog walking volunteer, I follow them on social media and spotted an appeal to rehome three Persian cats. I responded to say I was interested and subsequently a home check was carried out which was successful. Alas, this time it wasn't to be and the cats were fostered elsewhere, probably for the best as I then discovered I would be deploying to Afghanistan in my role as an RAF Reservist at the end of 2019.

As I came to the last few weeks of my tour and my thoughts started to return to home, I realised I was still going to miss having a cat around and that it would be nice to have a pair so that they could keep each other company. I wrote an email



Amber and Teddy



Ozzie

to The Cinnamon Trust at the end of January to say I would be coming home in a few weeks and to please bear me in mind if they had any pairs of cats looking for a long-term foster home. The next day, I received a reply to say they had a family of 3 whose owner was anxious to ensure that they would get settled somewhere together. I was sent a photo of Amber and Teddy, the 4-year-old cream British Shorthairs and Ozzie the 5-year-old black Oriental Shorthair and immediately fell for them. A few phone calls later and it was arranged that they would move in with me the week after I returned to the UK.

At midday on 20th February, three cat carriers and an abundance of kitty paraphernalia arrived and I was instantly smitten. As expected, from reading the background information on their personalities beforehand, Teddy was first out of his crate and did a lap of the lounge sniffing everything. Within half an hour of arriving they were all huddled together under a chair in the corner, but by the evening they'd all come and found me in the bedroom – Teddy already demanding tummy rubs!

It didn't take long for their characters to begin to show; Teddy is definitely the bravest, always making me smile and the most demanding – he thinks nothing of batting me in the face at 4:30am if he fancies a cuddle! Amber is an absolute little sweetheart, she is the first to appear at the sound of a packet rustling and loves to curl up at the end of the bed all night. Ozzie has been the most reserved, it was obvious he craved attention but was often too anxious to stay around for long. It is only in the last month or so that we have seen him come out of his shell and lie fully stretched out around the house which has been lovely to see. To have been able to watch him slowly settle in has been such a rewarding experience and I feel like we have a special bond now; he is a really loving cat, the fussiest about treats but adores catching and eating flies and, being Oriental, he enjoys a chat.

All three cats are an absolute joy to have around. I had a cat flap fitted to give them access to the back garden and they can almost always be found either playing

outside, curled up on the beds or wherever I am in the house. I find myself constantly taking pictures of them because they are SO CUTE!"



In Suffolk, **Alistair Webb** is so happy with **Ludo**:

"I had registered my interest in taking a pet from The Cinnamon Trust and a few weeks later I received an e-mail. The first line was....

"Ludo is an 8-year-old French Bulldog looking for a forever home" - my heart jumped for joy! I lost my last dog in January and my life was diminished. I knew that I wanted to take on an older, bereaved dog who had been treasured by their owner. I had predetermined that I would love this dog unconditionally, whatever size, shape or character.



Ludo with a new friend

After accepting lovely Ludo as my new charge, I drove to Birmingham to collect him, and he greeted me like a long lost friend. He has settled in very well, making lots of new friends of the canine and human variety, and is proving to be a very popular boy.

I am incredibly lucky as we are proving to be a perfect match and he has adapted to my life seamlessly. He still has anxiety issues if I'm not in sight, but we are working on that. The people at The Cinnamon Trust were amazing and have helped in every conceivable way.

We are both delighted to be ambassadors for The Cinnamon Trust and proud to be part of their good works. If you were ever considering becoming a foster carer for somebody else's animal, I can only encourage you to go ahead and register with this wonderful charity."



Maureen Watson wrote to us from Kent....

"After a stroke in spring 2020, it became necessary for me to go into residential nursing care as I could no longer care for myself or my darling cat. I have been a member of The Cinnamon Trust for over 10 years and every pet I have had I have

profiled with them. When this terrible situation arose my only concern was about my lovely cat, Narla. I contacted The Cinnamon Trust and asked for their help. I spoke to Debbie, who was so kind and managed to understand what I was saying through my tears. She noted Narla's details and said she would do her best to place Narla in a similar situation i.e. a bungalow in a quiet area with an enclosed back garden.

Once Debbie had found Narla's new home, Narla insisted on emailing her own news to her future Mum and Dad, along with photos of herself generally showing off and looking cute. Debbie organised for Narla to be collected on 22nd August for her journey to her new home. My tears stopped when the lovely pet carrier, Nicki, telephoned later that day to say all was well.

As Narla and her new Mum and Dad, Diane and Brian, had been writing to each other, a bond had been formed between us all. I moved into care a few weeks later and what kept me going was Diane and Brian keeping me up to date with Narla's adventures; it is so lovely that they have provided such a loving relaxed home for her. What a wonderful life she is having.

She is, of course, boss of her new family and has taken over their bed and summerhouse for snoozing. I'm so grateful to Debbie, Diane and Brian for not only fostering Narla, but for putting me in touch with some lovely new friends. From an awful situation something wonderful has happened and I am so thankful to The Cinnamon Trust for being there."

And **Brian** and **Dianne Towson** & **Narla** keep in touch:



Dianne with Narla

"When I cast my mind back to the day we got Narla it is full of emotion. The day came and was marked on our calendar and whilst we were so looking forward to meeting Narla, we could not help but feel for Maureen who had had to make such a difficult decision because of her failing health. Because we had been chatting to Maureen, whoops - I mean Narla - we felt we knew both of them very well.

I think it helped both sides to be able to have this wonderful creature to talk about and share her new adventure. This was a snippet from our first report:

"Narla sends her love and wants you to know she is being very good. You were right, Maureen, when you said she talks a lot and does lots of nose rubs.

Yesterday, during a sunny slot, we sat in the summerhouse having coffee with Narla sleeping on a chair basking in the sunlight. When the sun went in she suddenly got up, went to the back door and asked to go in, obviously she felt a chill in the air. She is so funny. We hope your move went well and they are looking after you.”

Brian and I feel that we have gained a friend in Maureen and are honoured to have been trusted by her and The Cinnamon Trust to look after this precious girl. I can only imagine the anguish people go through who have to make this decision without an organisation like The Trust to help.”



We receive many very moving letters from owners telling us just how much the help of our volunteers means to them, here are a couple:

Dawn Blackwell in Somerset wrote:

“There is nothing more precious than sharing my life with my loving pooch, JJ. He is now 8 years of age and I have had him since he was 6 months old. We enjoyed the outdoors and spent many afternoons on long walks enjoying all that it had to offer. But unfortunately it was short lived. JJ was 3 years of age and I was diagnosed with COPD, which changed my life completely. Instead of our adventures exploring different woodlands and parks etc, I found myself struggling to even walk him around my small garden. I thought long and hard about all the benefits JJ gives to me: help with loneliness and with any stress I felt and, of course, the cuddles and unconditional love. But he was a young dog and it seemed unfair that he was not getting the daily exercise he needed, but I was desperate not to lose him.

Well, my prayers were answered when someone told me about The Cinnamon Trust, a charity organisation to help people like myself. I have to be honest, I was a little apprehensive of a stranger looking after the health and safety of my beloved pet. My worries set aside, I gave them a call and a short time later along came a family with a young girl of about 8 called Caitlin. JJ warmed to her straight away and there was instant chemistry between them both. It is great to see his joy and excitement when they are due to pick him up for his walk. I often say her name and his ears pick up and he looks around waiting for the doorbell. She entered him into a dog competition and I was a very proud owner (mum) when I heard he came 2nd!

He is so relaxed in her company; they have grown up together. We had some fun as I showed Caitlin a few tricks I had taught him. I was delighted when Caitlin asked him to do the tricks and he was excited to show off for her. He often gets pressies, including a very smart Christmas jumper.

I am extremely grateful to Caitlin and her family for being a vital part of our lives and for The Cinnamon Trust - a fantastic charity which has taken the pressure off me and allowed me to have social interaction and have a sense of connection with the community.”

.... And volunteer **Rhian Drummond**, who with daughter **Caitlin** has been walking **JJ** since 2015, says:



Caitlin with JJ

“Caitlin has always wanted a dog and from the age of 6 or 7 the request to have a one of her own was frequent. I explained that as we are all out at school or work every day the dog would be very lonely, but that we could help out other people by walking their dogs.

An internet search led me to The Cinnamon Trust, we applied and, hey presto, in September 2015 we met Dawn and JJ. It was love at first sight for Caitlin (and JJ) and the beginning of a long relationship between our family (my son or husband often accompany us on walks) and Dawn and JJ.

Over the years there have been windy, rainy days when Caitlin has not wanted to go and walk JJ. However, she has been persuaded outside by a reminder that his little face will light up when he sees us and that if she had a dog of her own she would have to walk it twice a day. Committing to walking a dog for The Cinnamon Trust has been an excellent way to give Caitlin an insight into the responsibility that dog ownership carries and I would recommend it to all families who are wavering over such a big decision.

Dawn has become a friend to Caitlin, my husband Neil, and myself. Although Neil's family live nearby, mine are a long way away and it's been nice for me to have a 'family friend' that takes an interest in Caitlin's music and hobbies and who obviously has grown very fond of her.

We walk JJ every Saturday and often an extra afternoon in the week and would not dream of giving up this mutually beneficial relationship.”



Jacqueline Bailey writes from Lancashire:

"In November 2016 after a short illness, I was diagnosed with bile duct cancer. In the December, I had a major operation which kept me in hospital over Christmas and into the New Year. My main worry, apart from my family, was how I was going to look after my best friend Barney who, being a 15-hand chestnut gelding, couldn't look after himself.

I was very ill before the operation, during and for a couple of months after. Luckily I had brilliant friends at the farm where Barney was stabled who looked after him for me which was hard for them, because all of them had horses of their own to look after, and it's not an easy job.



Jacqueline with Barney

After a couple of months I finally got well enough to go back to the stables and back in the saddle. Sadly however, after 9 months the cancer returned and I was told it was terminal and was now on palliative care. I tried to carry on looking after Barney during chemotherapy but became quite ill, and realised I just couldn't carry on.

My Macmillan nurse contacted The Cinnamon Trust and asked if they could help; they said yes and, after a 6-hour journey, Barney arrived at his new home at The Trust's Hillside Farm sanctuary.

I missed him so much, so my husband drove me to Hillside at the end of February to see Barney and meet Julie the Sanctuary Manager; all my worries and anxieties were wiped away in an instant. What a fantastic place it is, not only are they looking after 3 horses (Barney probably the hardest) they also had cats, dogs, tortoises, countless birds and even some sheep! I have never seen a place like it, the way the staff look after and care for the animals is exceptional, the farm is fantastic with facilities that are just superb for the animals. It really is a home from home.

I miss Barney so much, but at least I don't have to worry about him being cared for properly. I can't say thank you enough to The Cinnamon Trust and the Sanctuary Manager Julie for everything."

We featured Barney in our Spring/Summer 2020 newsletter, and he's a happiness star on the front of this one.

Volunteers who have received a Gold Certificate for exceptional service this time are:

Andrew Riby (Nottinghamshire), **Helen Holland** (West Sussex), **Howard** and **Karen Long** (Dorset), **Kaz Pringle** (Middlesex), **Sid** and **Jane Evans** (Devon), **Mica Walker** (Essex) and **Bruce Mead** (Dorset).

Long Service Awards (over 10 years) go to:

Gillian Stephens (Dorset), **Marsha Palmer** (Devon), **Wendy Gates** (Devon), **Carole Jones** (Yorkshire), **Jill Southworth** (Merseyside), **Margaret Hocking** (Cornwall), **Sheila Gozzett** (Devon), **Jeannie Alvis** (Dorset), **Phil Corker** (Cheshire), **Mary Luckham** (Surrey), **Nadine Weston** (Lancashire) and **Julie Oakes** (Norfolk).

And Special Owner Nominated Awards go to:

Rob Gordon (Gloucestershire), **Gemma Wade** (Essex), **Anne-Marie Plumb** (Essex), **Katie Evans** (Berkshire) and **Julie Tasgun** (West Sussex).



To all our registered volunteers, a huge thank you. The difference you make to the lives of both owners and their precious, treasured pets is incalculable in 'normal' times and through this last, horrible year even more so! We stand on our reputation and by helping as you do, cheerfully, with love, compassion and immense caring, you enhance that reputation every day.



Pet Friendly Care Homes

There really is light at the end of the tunnel and I pray everyone at all the care homes and retirement complexes on our register is going to have a very much happier summer!

Meanwhile, a couple of lovely updates – first from **Debbie Woollacott**, Manager of **Castle Grove Nursing Home**:

“Set in four acres on the edge of Exmoor, Castle Grove Nursing Home caters for residential, nursing and end of life care. We believe and understand the importance of, wherever possible, keeping pets with their owners when they move into our Home.

Even when a resident is no longer able to look after their pet, the staff gladly feed,

walk, groom, and take general care of the animals, keeping them in the resident's room bringing happiness and company to their owners.

We have a small graveyard for any pets that have passed away under our beautiful Magnolia tree.

Over the years we have had dogs, cats, budgies, and fish. During normal times, relatives will bring their dogs in to visit. We also have visits from the local Donkey Sanctuary who bring a Donkey into the lounge, the 'small animal' lady who visits with guinea pigs, rabbits, flying squirrels, tortoises and dogs, and 'the reptile man' whose animals are not quite so cuddly!

Our Activities Co-ordinator has a lovely little dog, called Moo Moo, which she brings in some days to spend time with the residents; being small she can sit on their laps and loves being made a fuss of.

We have house pets which include Billy the budgie, goldfish, Topsy the Collie, Dotty the Cocker Spaniel, and Molly, our loveable cat – these pets share their love around all of our residents. Roaming the grounds are Mabel and Henry, a hen and cockerel, who spend their days clearing up the seed under numerous bird feeders outside residents' rooms.

Animals play a very big part in the lives of Castle Grove residents and staff, none more so than over the past year when we have been locked away from the outside world. To be able to stroke, talk to, spend time with our pets has a calming effect and makes us all smile."



And from **Sunrise Senior Living** in **Tettenhall**, Wolverhampton, Activities Co-ordinator **Geraldine Bunting** says:

"Pets of all shapes and colours have been through the doors of Sunrise Senior Living at Tettenhall over the 13 years of being open. The pets are very diverse, but unite in bringing a smile to the residents' faces.

Residents are encouraged to bring their pets along with them when moving into



Janet with Mo Mo and a resident



Henry and Mable



Doreen with Suzi

Sunrise, having a positive impact on their wellbeing and comfort at an unprecedented time. Often, other residents benefit from the animals within Sunrise as well.

We have a Pets' Corner with Madge the Budgie and Mitzee the Angora rabbit, both rescue animals. Mitzee has free range of the Activities Lounge at night!

All pets have a routine in place for feeding, cleaning and regular vet checkups. The biggest challenge is trying to keep residents from feeding covert treats outside their diet! The pets have a vital role in offering wonderful company and often fill the residents' days with additional purpose.



Patricia with Mitzie

The Reminiscence Neighbourhood where our residents living with Dementia reside has its own pet dog, Gracie, who is part of the furniture and goes home each evening with The Reminiscence Coordinator, Oksana Dovey.

This year, we hatched four bantams in our incubator giving residents something to focus on each day, waiting with anticipation for each egg to crack open. The chicks then moved to a pen in the garden for residents to visit on their daily garden walk. More recently residents were thrilled to hear the cockerel crowing each morning, bringing memories flooding back from years gone by. Now, the chicks are five months old and have been rehomed on my own farm in Shropshire - the residents will be able to visit next year (fingers crossed) to see them in their full glory.

The animals play such an important part in the residents' lives at Sunrise, often a best friend to them. This year especially has highlighted the importance of animals within a care setting. So much joy can be gained at a time when visits from loved ones are restricted.

Isolation seems so much better with your best friend by your side."



Poldarves Farm Sanctuary

Poldarves is looking just lovely at the moment, daffodils and primroses and

snowdrops everywhere. It's sounding lovely as well, with all the birds singing and getting very busy. One little robin has decided to patrol inside! He flies in, flies around announcing his presence all the while and then flies out again, and he does this every morning.... We also have a ten o'clock mouse! A tiny little wood mouse who comes to finish any seeds on the table that the birds have left, but he does this at ten o'clock every night just as we let all the dogs out for their last night 'relief' – he watches, unperturbed! The cock pheasant that we raised is still here – he enjoys whatever falls off the bird tables and one day came face to face with Tiger Lily, our beautiful 18 year old cat who was a little terror in her youth – well, the pheasant flew at her! She just tossed her tail and with her head in the air, stalked off. Spring is here and that means opening up the spring paddock for the ponies – it's like watching the Shetland Grand National. They race laps around the edge of the field, led by Dude, and the rest in hot pursuit with Bridget, at the grand age of 33, bringing up the rear.

Winter came and went with its own magic – cosy nights, indoor games, warming stews, bracing walks snuggled into woolly coats. But winter couldn't stop sadness visiting when we lost our darling Pug, **Spud** (15) so very much loved by all; also **Kippa** (21) sweet little black and white cat; **Sam** (19) so handsome tabby and white. We've also lost little **Frankie** our blue budgie.

And then came two very loving, very affectionate Persian cats, **Fudge** (13) and **Lynette** (16). Fudge always yeowls after his food as a thank you and to let you know he's come in. He does like to keep us informed as to his whereabouts and the goings on, but don't leave your shoes unattended by the back door – he'll pee in them!! Fudge loves fresh prawns as well as sitting on a lap for a cuddle. He's made lots of new friends and patrols up and down the corridor to check on them all through the day, but he always sleeps back with his old friend, Lynette.

Lynette is quite shy, but she does love to be groomed, and to sit on your lap in the evening being cuddled in your arms. If other cats come and bother her she very gracefully turns her bottom to them and whips them with her beautiful white, fluffy tail! If the sun is shining, she does venture into the gardens for an explore and watching the ducks on the pond from a high 'log toadstool' is a favourite pastime.



Fudge and Lynette

Maggie (14) our bonnie wee lass, as her mum would say, is irresistible. She's a very calm little soul although she does have a mad five minutes every now and again doing zoomies around the garden or playing with her tennis ball. Maggie has



Maggie

an eye for the best bed in the house by the Aga – she loves to snuggle up and snooze at any opportunity. She has a fantastic internal clock and is first up – by the Aga – for her lunch and dinner, being particularly partial to a homemade pasta!

Kai (15) is particularly partial to any tasty snack that we have for our break times! And he's so sweet – he plays with his very own cuddly penguin which he takes to bed every night. Kai cries with excitement when he knows we're preparing to set off for a walk, and he carries on until we're out of the gate – he loves exploring the woods, river and beach. We discovered he absolutely loves pancakes on Pancake Day – so we have them more often now!



Kai

Blue (11) is such a fun loving boy, he can cheer anyone up with his adorable little smile and he's always up for a cuddle when anyone sits down. He's a very confident little boy and likes to join in every conversation – when you talk to him, he moves his head from side to side listening intently and give little woofs back! He's made a best friend of Maisie, our Collie – he sleeps with her and cleans her but woofs at her fidgeting when he is trying to sleep! Blue came in with an elephant toy, which he still carries around by its trunk, but at walk times it gets left behind – a ball is way better to chase! A huge, loveable character in a tiny little body!



Blue

So, now we're looking forward to summer – warm weather and all our favourite picnics and barbecues, paddling pools and the beach. Mummy duck has come back and is again nesting in the clematis over the cat gardens – duckling patrol is therefore again on the cards to get them all safely to the pond when the time comes. The squirrels have a new adventure playground. The cats will bask in their suntrap gardens in which we have to top up the catmint, basil, mint, lavender and more, and the whole pace of life changes to easy and balmy!



Hillside Farm Sanctuary

Christmas was, as always, a very exciting time for us all. We have so much to look forward to, with a virtual mountain of presents for the residents to unwrap and a full cooked turkey dinner with all the trimmings. The day was full of fun from start to finish, new toys and treats were unwrapped with great gusto and many a treat was consumed along the way. The air was filled with not only the sound of Christmas songs, but of the joyful squeaks from new toys, a favourite being a squeaky Brussell sprout ball with a particularly high-pitched squeak; the dogs just loved it. Many of the plush toys were promptly destuffed, so picture the scene – shredded wrapping paper and soft toy stuffing everywhere, at one point there was not a single patch of floor to be seen – but truly a great time was had by all! Cats (being cats) were rather more reserved – until the catnip toys were unwrapped and, well, then it was a whole other story! Many of the resident cats adore catnip, some go crazy for it and a frenzied tumbling game ensues, while others just become very chilled out and relaxed to the point of being completely horizontal and purring very loudly. Add to this certain treats which we will not name, that are well known to excite cats, and we are sure you can picture the scene – 33 very excited cats, fuelled on treats and catnip with wrapping paper and packaging discarded here, there and everywhere; an excited team of carers joining in with all the fun and games and then the roast turkey arrives and is served up and promptly devoured! Fun, games and full tummies make for happy residents and are the signs of a truly great Christmas here at Hillside Farm.

We have had a few light dustings of snow, which always looks so beautiful, but it also sent our Retrievers Kyla, Zoe and Nina into overdrive. They just love to rampage through it at top speed and then throw themselves on the ground with legs high in the air to have a good old roll around, wiggling and wagging the whole time. Others were less enthusiastic! A lot of sniffing and shaking of paws! Most residents are happy to come back in and be dried off with warm towels, but the Retrievers needed a lot more persuasion!

Crisp frosty morning walks, with warm cosy coats on and with the grass crunching under the tentative paws of our Terriers, Matty, Bridgette and Dotty, before they go zooming off at full pelt leaving just their tracks and us behind them. All the resident dogs love the fresh newness of the fields, with night time scents from fox and deer – and there might be a pheasant to flush! We watch as the dogs, with their noses to the ground, go this way, then that way, zig-zagging back and forth across the fields, their tails up high....

Cats don't do cold mornings! Most choose to stay snuggled up on the radiator beds or on the comfy sofas, mostly trying to locate the sunniest spots to curl up in. However, some of the more adventurous ones will venture into the gardens to sun worship, where you will find them sitting high on the outdoor climbers looking

straight up to the sun with eyes closed, just bathing in the lovely winter sunrays.

Forever in our hearts are those we have lost. **Misty** Greyhound (14), **Buster** Golden Retriever (9), **Rubi** chocolate Labrador (15), **Daisy** Lurcher (13), **Molly** Collie Cross (18), **Bridgette**, Jack Russell (14), Rosie, **Torti** cat (17) and **Lucy**, grey cat (19). RIP sweet, gentle souls.

Bringing their own magic to Hillside, the new arrivals have made themselves very much at home!

Dotty (13) is a beautiful, happy smiling girl, a little shy at first, but she quickly came



out of her shell and now she loves to cuddle up on the sofa for snuggles. She also likes to help on morning rounds and she especially likes to check on the tortoises. Dotty enjoys her walks, when she likes to give her nose a good workout, sniffing her way around the fields. Dotty has a good strong voice, which she uses to alert us to any person approaching the dog rooms; she has become our new security guard and is very dedicated to the task – she is always on duty. She loves her food, especially roast chicken, but she enjoys all the home-cooked dinners that are on offer. By the end of mealtimes there is always



an empty bowl, a full tummy and a very happy Dotty! And, she had a very happy birthday party with special treats and a very special cake!

Twiddles (10) is a gorgeous sweet girl, who soon settled and began to play with us with the teaser toys. She absolutely loves the scratching posts, she also loved the Christmas tree which we were constantly having to redress – although we were pretty sure it wasn't all Twiddles' doing!! Twiddles is not what people would call a typical Torti - she likes lots of attention and fuss, she will twirl around on your lap while being

fussed, purring very loudly. But, like most cats, she knows her own mind and will let us know when enough is enough. She has also discovered the indoor wall boxes and she likes to climb right up to the very top and survey her surroundings

with an air of royalty. She is enjoying her food, although as a diabetic girl we have to monitor what she is eating, but this does not hamper her enjoyment in the slightest.

Sally (14) is a very beautiful, gentle girl. A little reserved at first, but soon came round and decided that we were OK. She has all the markings of a



gorgeous Spaniel, but with the long body of a Basset! Sally's head enters the room a long time before her tail finally arrives! Her body just seems to go on forever, but she is very slinky, you could almost imagine Sally on the catwalk – she would give any top model a run for their money. Sally likes to be warm so she prefers a bed in front of the range, but if those happen to be taken she will take one that is next to a radiator – although she has been known to climb into a bed that is already occupied, usually much to the dismay of the original occupant. Sally has the most amazing bark and she uses it to let us know exactly what she wants and when she wants it, and if we happen to disturb her naptime she will let us know all about it!

Sally loves her food and is enjoying the home-cooked menu, she is particularly partial to roast chicken and vegetables.

Holly (12) is a little darling, who on arrival took everything in her stride; she is a tiny girl and such a gentle soul. Holly loves to play ball, from first thing in the





morning to last thing at night, she just wants you to throw the ball for her, which she will chase and bring back to you busily wagging her tail the whole time and with a happy bounce in her trot. Holly is such a happy, jolly little soul, so full of life and joy, and she can put a smile on any face and a flutter in any heart just by trotting into the room. Holly loves her walks, she dashes around with nose to the ground in search of any new scent trails that may have been left behind overnight. We quickly discovered that she loves her food and will be straight into the fridge given the chance – she is officially our new fridge diver! Holly has not got any real favourite food, just food in general makes her happy, although when the chicken is being served up and the smell of cooked chicken starts to fill the room, she does get very excited and runs around in circles; when she is given her bowl, it is not full for long!



With all the current strangeness that the world is experiencing, we at Hillside are looking forward with positive hopes of warm, sunny days to come so that we can enjoy our streamside picnics with all the old favourite treats. Some of the dogs will go charging through the stream creating great splashes, which others will try to avoid at any cost. We will go on long, leisurely walks through the beautiful fields, taking shade when needed underneath the fantastic trees that have been growing so well throughout the year. We have

high hopes of resuming our adventurous trips to the beaches and forests, with their packed treats and toys for chasing. The dogs love their trips out with all those new sniffs to be had and new pools to splash in, be it muddy or sandy – they are very happy with either.

We are busy preparing and planning our vegetable garden so that the residents can enjoy the fresh homegrown veg again this year. We were very lucky last year and most of the veg did well, so we are quietly optimistic for another good crop this year. We have a super area for the horses being busily constructed which will be completed very shortly, it is going to be a lovely, sound area for the horses to use – an area which should be mud free! We are pretty sure that the sheep will enjoy this area too, as they have been taking a great interest in the construction of it, standing by the gates like supervisors and bleating instructions to the gardeners!

Poetry Corner

Yvonne Evans from Bristol sent us this poem written by her friend, also Yvonne Evans, in Llandudno:

My Request

When I kneel at the gates of heaven,
And St Peter assesses my worth,
For the things I have done, or left undone,
In my sojourn here on earth.

I don't merit status or glory,
Fine raiment was never my style,
A harp would be useless in my hands,
And clouds only last a while.

I don't crave the wings of an angel,
A crown or a halo of gold,
The heavenly choir would shun me,
But my wishes are small when all told.

There's just one special thing that I long for,
And pray I'll be worthy of that,
Dear Lord, in thy infinite mercy,
Please give me my little black cat.

Jean and **Alan Evans** in Devon sent this lovely poem:

Come Home To Be With Me

I stood beside your bed last night, I came to have a peep;
I could see that you were crying, you found it hard to sleep.
I whined to you so softly as you brushed away a tear, "it's me,
I haven't left you, I'm well, I'm fine, I'm here."

I was close to you at breakfast, I watched you pour the tea;
You were thinking of the many times your hands reached down to me.
I was with you at the shops today, your arms were getting sore,
I longed to take your parcels; I wish I could do more.

I was with you at my grave today, you tend it with such care;
I want to reassure you that I'm not lying there.

I walked with you towards the house as you fumbled for your key.
I gently put my paw on you, I smiled and said "it's me."

You looked so very tired, and sank into a chair;
I tried so hard to let you know that I was standing there.
It's possible for me to be so near you every day,
To say to you with certainty "I never went away."

You sat there very quietly, then I smiled; I think you knew....
In the stillness of the evening, I was very close to you.
The day is over.... I smile and watch you yawning,
And say "goodnight, God bless, I'll see you in the morning."

And when the time is right for you to cross the brief divide,
I'll rush across to greet you and we'll stand, side by side.
I have so many things to show you, there is so much for you to see;
Be patient, live your journey out.... Then come home to be with me.

And Finally

Well, winter is behind us, and so is 2020 during which we helped 154,022 people with 156,006 pets, great work from all at HQ and our volunteers who made this happen.

Ahead is summer and, with luck and fair wind, we will be free from restrictions, the weather will celebrate with us, events can go ahead in the sunshine and happiness in some way will visit everyone. I think we need to gather all our collective, optimistic thoughts and cast them to the ether – hope springs eternal!

God bless, everyone.

Averil R. Jarvis MBE
Founder and Chief Executive

